



National Press Photographers Association

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Dr. José Romero, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases
1600 Clifton Road, NE, MS-H24-8
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027

RE: Public Comment on November 23, 2020 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Meeting--Docket No. CDC-2020-0117

On behalf of the National Press Photographers Association (NPPA), the country's leading organization of visual journalists, we ask that journalists who have direct contact with the public on a regular basis, and particularly visual journalists, be expressly included in the phase of the COVID-19 vaccine that includes the essential and critical infrastructure workforce.

Visual journalists cannot work from home, and have put their health and lives at risk on a daily basis to cover both the COVID-19 pandemic and other matters of public concern, including matters critical to the health and safety of the public and critical to our democracy. These journalists must work in the conditions they find—regardless of the risk. While others have the option to walk away from large crowds, or to avoid members of the public that don't follow CDC health guidelines, visual journalist repeatedly put their own safety at risk to document what is occurring and inform their communities, large and small. As a result, we have seen visual journalists become infected, hospitalized, and even, unfortunately, succumb to COVID-19.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency has recognized front line news reporters as critical infrastructure workers in its document "[Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce: Ensuring Community and National Resilience](https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version_4.0_CISA_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_FINAL%20AUG%2018v3.pdf) In [COVID-19 Response](https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version_4.0_CISA_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_FINAL%20AUG%2018v3.pdf)," available at: [https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version 4.0 CISA Guidance on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers FINAL%20AUG%2018v3.pdf](https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version_4.0_CISA_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_FINAL%20AUG%2018v3.pdf) (see p. 19, which lists: "Workers who support radio, print, internet and television news and media services, including, but not limited to front line news reporters, studio, and technicians for newsgathering, reporting, and publishing news."). Almost every state has issued similar executive orders regarding journalists as essential workers, exempt from curfews and other similar restrictions on the general public.

NPPA respectfully urges the committee to recognize not just the risk that visual journalists face, but the essential benefit that their ability to safely report on their communities provides to their communities as a whole, by providing early access to the vaccine in order to further protect the important work of these individuals in gathering and disseminating news, information and images

to the nation and the world.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with your committee in order to facilitate and expedite this critical request.

Very truly yours,

Mickey H. Osterreicher

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General Counsel

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